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mission fields at home

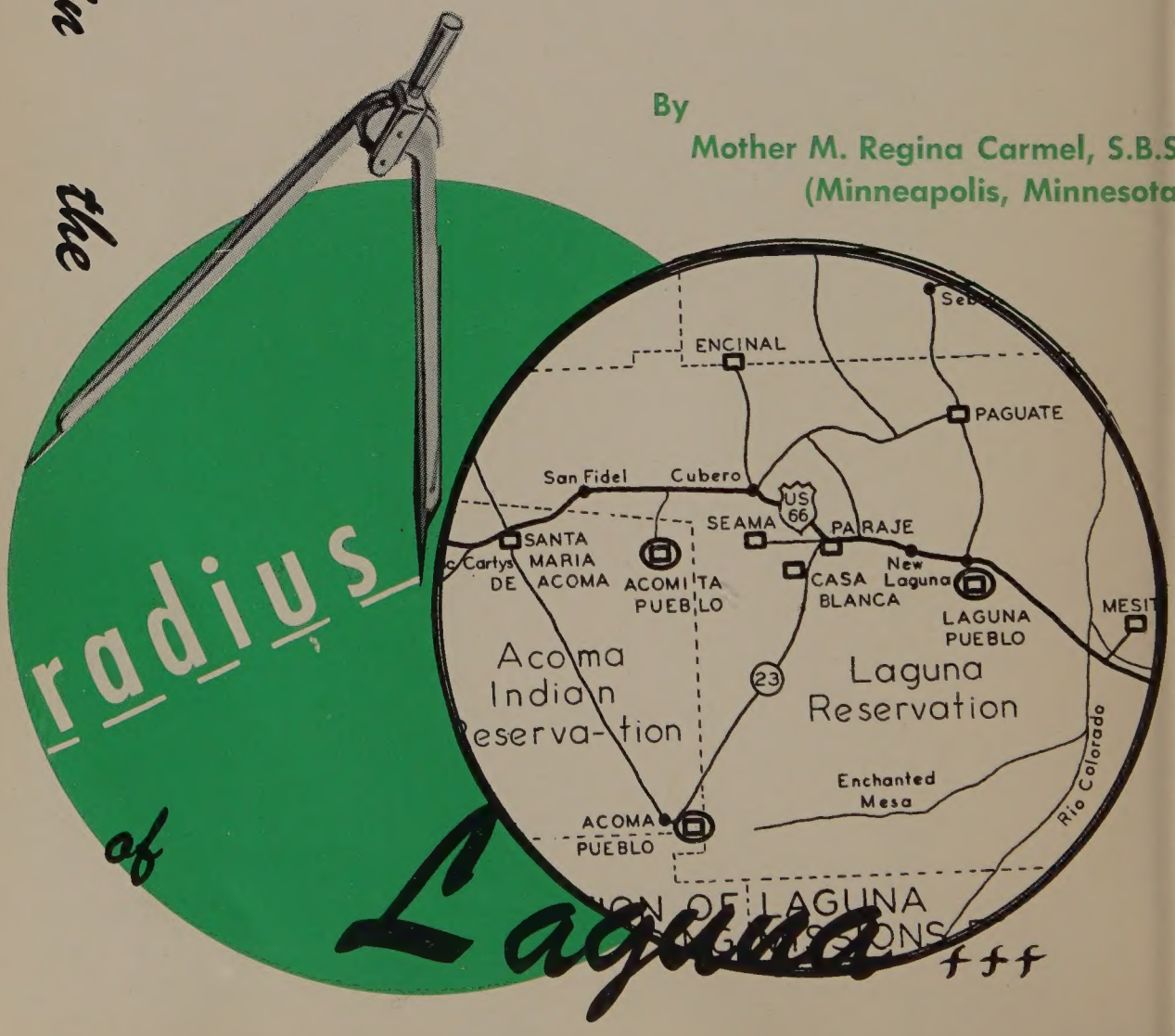
Sisters of the
Blessed Sacrament,
Cornwells Heights, Pa.
February, 1958

● God is good! During the past year His munificent goodness has been made manifest in many ways. As the spring of another Church year dawned with the coming of Advent, the supernatural Life burst forth in the soul of one of our dear old Indians. In the twilight of her life, at the age of eighty and odd—as she says—Alice Martin received the gift of Faith and was baptized. Peter, her husband, was baptized conditionally, and they were married. For many years Alice and her husband have walked up the hill to Holy Mass on Sunday morning arriving early to pray. Peter is so old that there was no record of his Baptism; though he knew he was baptized from the stories that his mother had told him. When he was a little boy, he and his parents went to Isleta because persecution had caused the padres to leave Laguna. Way back in 1906 he and Alice had been married but there was no priest to perform the ceremony. Peter laughed as he told us that now he had two weddings and two baptisms; so he guessed he

within the radius of Laguna

By

Mother M. Regina Carmel, S.B.S
(Minneapolis, Minnesota



was sure to go to heaven! As he talked he narrated much of the history of the early years of his life on the **Laguna Reservation,** the struggles of the people and the padres to keep the light of Faith burning in the hearts of our Indians. At the beginning of December Alice was baptized; on the feast of Our Lady's Immaculate Conception, Our Divine Saviour came to the loving hearts of Peter and Alice Martin as they received Him in the Sacrament of His love for the first time. One could but think of the Gospel story of the laborers in the vineyard as these two spiritually radiant souls entered into the fullness of the life of the Mystical Body; their earthly journey slowly but surely drawing to a close.

The exciting and festive hunting season has just about ended in all parts of New Mexico, and we have been treated to steaks, roasts and stews from the deer suppers. The supper is held in thanksgiving by each family that kills a deer and all are invited to attend and partake of the stew. This main dish many times contains the seeds of the various crops that the family intends to plant for the coming year. It is amazing how generous our people have been to us, giving not only bread and tortillas on occasion, but also carrots, melons, tomatoes, pumpkins, etc., from their gardens. Needless to say we are grateful.

St. Margaret Mary Mission at **Paraje** now boasts a bona-fide choir loft, the pride and joy of the Ladies' Club who have been begging for it for a long time, and who raised the money for its erection. Father has been putting it off, fearing the ceiling was not high enough, until a contractor from Albuquerque assured him there was plenty of space. The new loft was used for the first time during evening Mass on the First Friday of December. After Mass the whole congregation went up to inspect it and all were delighted. Plans were immediately begun to have more food sales to raise funds to put a confessional under the new choir stairs. They are truly an active and cooperative group with a devoted interest in their Church.

Our friends from the Emerald Isle would be interested in an incident that occurred at choir practice one evening. Sister was arranging the program for the following Sunday, when one of the members said, "Let's sing our Indian Hymn!" Sister answered, "You'll have to teach that one to me." "But you taught it to us!" was the prompt reply, as they all began turning the pages of their Pius X Hymnals, "It's a real Indian melody." Imagine Sister's surprise when they showed her "O Mary of Graces"—the melody is Gaelic.

At the Sacred Heart Mission in **Mesita** the nucleus of another choir has formed with a few former pupils of St. Catherine's in Sante Fe. One day after Holy Mass, one of the girls remarked, "I wish we could practice and sing some of the hymns we used to sing at school." We assured them that they could, if they were willing to stay a little while after the Mass each week. They agreed, and invited the rest of their families to stay, too. Each week there are a few more participants. In fact, many who don't sing at all, just stay to listen.

A priest who had once been a missionary in the wilds of Africa once said, "In Africa the missionaries have backaches and in America heartaches." Our greatest one is the inability to adequately care for the spiritual needs of our Indians. Down through the centuries these good people have not had the opportunity of thorough instructions because the laborers have been too few. True, they have more opportunities to learn to know and love their Faith than they did fifty years ago when there were no Sisters and few Priests. But even now what are we among so many—over 5,000 souls scattered the length and breadth of two reservations—three Sisters and three Priests struggling to teach the children the minimum essentials. The spiritually starved adults receive only an infrequent teaspoonful that can be given

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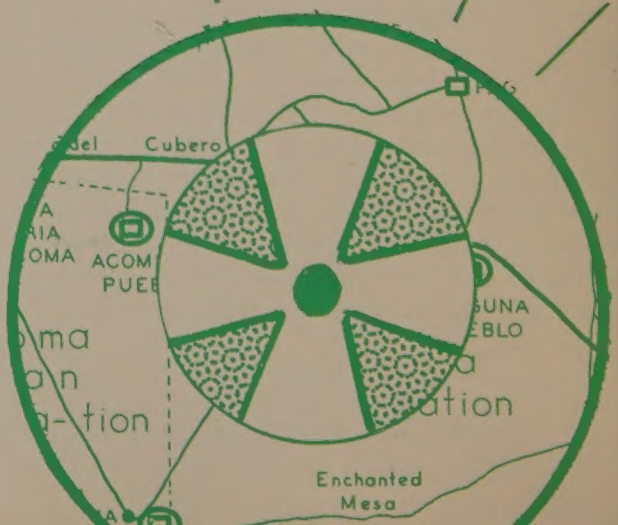
Eunice Pino, Mrs. Alice Martin, Billy Pino, Mr. Peter Martin and John Pino

Sr M. Peter Julian, S.B.S. visiting Alice and Peter Martin in their home

by way of visitation. There are so many that it would take years to reach all of them. They lack opportunities to learn how much our dear Lord loves them, but when they come to realize this tremendous truth many respond with heroic zeal. We have a family in **Paguate** that lives several miles back in a canyon and until the children began coming to instructions they knew little of God's love for them. Now every Sunday through snow and cold they come down from their home in the canyon to Holy Mass. Often they have to walk and this is a great sacrifice on Sundays when the Mass is at 7:30 A. M. and darkness still envelops the village. It takes more than an hour to get to the church, but Clifford, Kenneth and their little sisters rarely miss. Their mother comes when there is someone to care for the babies at home but many times she regrets that she cannot be with them.

During the hunting season one of our Indian men set a splendid example and God blessed him with an unusual stroke of good fortune. In fact, he is still the talk of the village. It seems that he refused two invitations to go hunting, once so that he could help Father with the church bazaar and the second time because he was afraid that he would miss Sunday Mass. The second time he told the men that after Mass he would go south and catch up with them in his pick-up truck. They did everything possible to get him to change his mind and go on Saturday night but to no avail. Frank said he would go after Mass and after Mass he went. Driving along the hunting trail about 100 miles south of Laguna on the way to meet his party, he saw a very beautiful buck with the large antlers that all Indians prize. Frank stopped his truck and waited until the animal was right in his path, then with one shot he felled the deer. He never even had to get out of his truck and he came home with the only deer in his party. The men who went out on Saturday night came home unrewarded after walking miles. When we were speaking to Frank afterwards, he admitted that he was as surprised as anyone and never had he gotten his deer so easily, but he attributed it all to the blessing of God.

Whether it is nuclear experiments or natural phenomenon we do not know but the weather has been most unusual. Howling, lashing winds and snow, frozen ground and ice covered windshields greet us in the morning early. By late



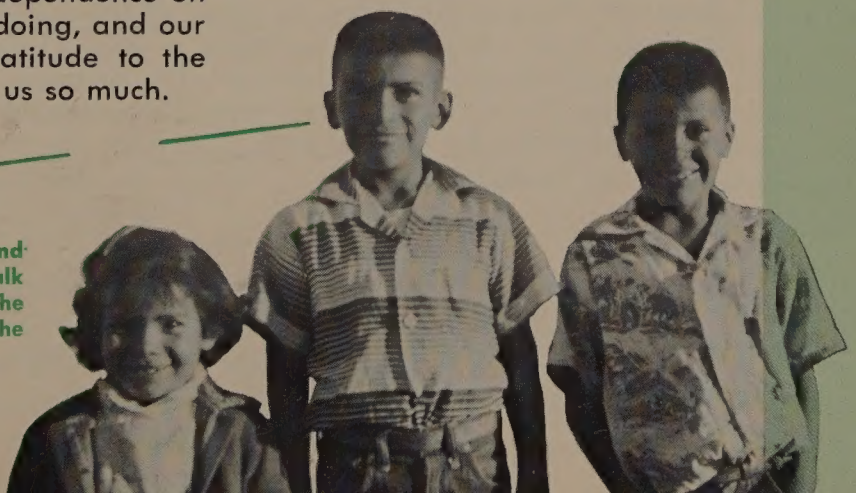
Rev. Emeric Nordmeyer, O.F.M., pastor of San Jose Mission in Laguna, New Mexico, baptizes Mrs. Alice Martin

morning the sun has changed the atmosphere to a brisk autumn, early afternoon brings deeply gutted muddy roads caused by melted snow or heavy showers. On some of the back roads to the villages where we give our instructions the road resembles a pond and as the car plunges through the mud, decreasing visibility and threatening to remain in one spot permanently, we pray to St. Raphael to keep the car moving so that the little ones who are waiting for instruction will not wait in vain. As we return late in the evening we reach for the sweater and shawl for the temperature is dropping rapidly and the wind whistles the warning of the approach of a wintry night.

The Laguna Missionary is the privileged recipient of inspiring, stimulating and challenging experiences. The powerful effects of prayer that we see so often in the mysterious workings of God's grace in the lives of our people and the constant challenge of obstacles, many seemingly impossible, keep us ever mindful of our complete dependence on Him whose work we are doing, and our hearts are filled with gratitude to the good God who has given us so much.

The Indian mission terrain within the radius of Laguna, New Mexico, is under the care of the Franciscan Fathers of St. John the Baptist Province, Cincinnati, Ohio. Rev. Emeric Nordmeyer, O.F.M. is pastor of San Jose Mission, in Laguna. From this mission the Pueblo Indians in 8 other surrounding villages are served.

Here three S.B.S. sister-missioners give catechetical instructions weekly in government schools. Along with the religious instructions, the Sisters aid the Fathers by visiting the pueblo homes regularly to ascertain the material and spiritual needs of the souls whom they are privileged to serve. The dirth of missionaries in the Southwest of our land is so acute and the mission needs (educational, spiritual and material) of these first Americans beg the exercise of your Christian charity.



"Tiny", Kenneth and Clifford Romero walk miles to assist at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at Paguate

MISSION angles

New Orleans

"In my Father's House there are many MANSIONS." These words of Our Lord aptly apply to the Mansion family here pictured, in Saint Peter Claver Parish in New Orleans. Not many of our time honored families can manage to assemble five generations of their lineage into one homey gathering like this. Of course, there are many more Mansions than you can get into one snapshot, but for their own amusement, in this one they placed one from each succeeding generation, with the newest addition for good measure. In the bottom row are Warner, Jr., aged 2, and Kim Joseph, aged 8 months. In the second row we have Mrs. Jeanne Gargani (great grandmother), and Mrs. Mary Mansion, (great, great grandmother). In the last row are Warner, Sr., and Mrs. Marguerite Phillips (grandmother).

Mrs. Mary Mansion, the great, great grandmother, is one of the pillars of the Church here, and has been particularly good to the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament who have been missioned to Saint Peter Claver's and Corpus Christi parishes throughout the years. Many of us will long remember her frequent visits to the convent when she brought thoughtful donations and asked prayers for herself and her family.

At the age of 83, Mrs. Mansion is still an active member of several Church societies. She has been a widow for 33 years and has managed to raise 9 of the 16 children God sent to her. Today Mrs. Mansion can justly boast of 42 grandchildren, 44 great grandchildren, and 2 great, great grandchildren. At present we have several of her great grandchildren attending Saint Peter Claver School. The members of the Mansion Family in this section of the Lord's vineyard are blessed in many many ways, most especially in having such a valiant woman as this great, great grandmother in their midst.

—Sr. M. Cleophas, S.B.S.
(Brooklyn, New York)

ROBERT HANDCOX, a senior at St. Elizabeth High School in Chicago, recently received an appointment to West Point Military Academy from Congressman William L. Dawson, Chairman of the House Government Operations Committee.

The future West Pointer has piled up academic, social, and athletic honors at St. Elizabeth: he is president of his class and of the Student Council, captain of the football and track teams, a member of the senior basketball team, an active sodalist, a member of the high school division of the Catholic Interracial Council of Chicago, and an all-around "A" student who is currently aiming at the valedictorianship of his class. In making his selection for the coveted appointment, Congressman Dawson lauded Robert's outstanding achievement.

This is the first time in the history of the school that such an honor has been bestowed upon one of her "favorite sons." The appointment is effective in June, 1958.

—Sr. Maria Pietro, S.B.S.
(Philadelphia)

Chicago

Left to right: Robert Handcox, Mr. Joseph Robichaux, Jr., Mr. Lloyd Davis, Congressman William L. Dawson, Rev. Aloysius Zimmerman, S.V.D., Sr. M. Alphonsa, S.B.S. (principal), Rev. Clement Shapker, S.V.D. (pastor), Mrs. Lela Marshall.

Cleveland

In the Cleveland Press on New Year's Day among the pictures of the eleven men and women considered as the outstanding Greater Cleveland citizens of 1957 was the picture of Sister Thomas Aquinas, S.B.S. On October 16, 1957, Sister plunged into the Chagrin River in an unsuccessful attempt to save the life of Anita Black, her little fourth grade pupil at Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament School. Both Sister and Anita were drowned.

Sister's picture was next to that of a young Negro athlete, Jim Brown. The little children from O.L.B.S. School noticed this and at once called attention to it. One little lad responded by saying, "That's where Sister's picture **should** be. Our Sisters are always with us."

Stamps, Stamps, Cancelled Stamps!!! Help the missions by sending cancelled stamps to NOVITIATE STAMP DEPARTMENT, SISTERS OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT, CORNWELLS HEIGHTS, PA. (Please send commemorative, pre-cancelled, foreign, and high value stamps with a quarter of an inch of paper around each.)

our parish

By
Sr. Mary of the
Holy Child
(New York)

● WONDER-FULL it is for a Sister of the Blessed Sacrament to belong to a parish! Through Baptism, the center of her life and the center of the parish are one — the Holy Eucharist.

The parish of Saint Bridget of Erin in St. Louis, Missouri has a long history. It was established in 1853. In 1854 the church was begun and during the years it obtained the title of the mother church of the central part of the city. During the 19th and early part of the 20th centuries Christ in Saint Bridget's tabernacle gave forth the life-giving sacraments and nourished the faith of the parishioners. Today, after 100 years, Christ is still with

Center: Rev. Aloysius Marschner, Pastor of St. Bridget of Erin Parish in St. Louis, administering the Sacrament of Baptism.
Top left: Christine, Catherine and Susan Torrey.
Bottom left: Vivian, Carolyn and Sylvester Ford with Sr. Florence Marie, S.B.S., principal of St. Bridget School.
Bottom center: Rev. Joseph Kohler and Rev. Aloysius Marschner conducting instruction class.

OMPASS our lives in St. Louis

Top right: The convent chapel at St. Bridget's, furnished through the apostolic generosity of Mr. Oscar Koehler.
Bottom right: Mother M. Brendan, S.B.S., with children of St. Bridget School.

Most Rev. Joseph E. Ritter, D.D., Archbishop of St. Louis

"Building Rosary" at the home of Mrs. Beckham.

us giving the same sacraments and nourishing the same faith among souls hungry for the Bread of Life.

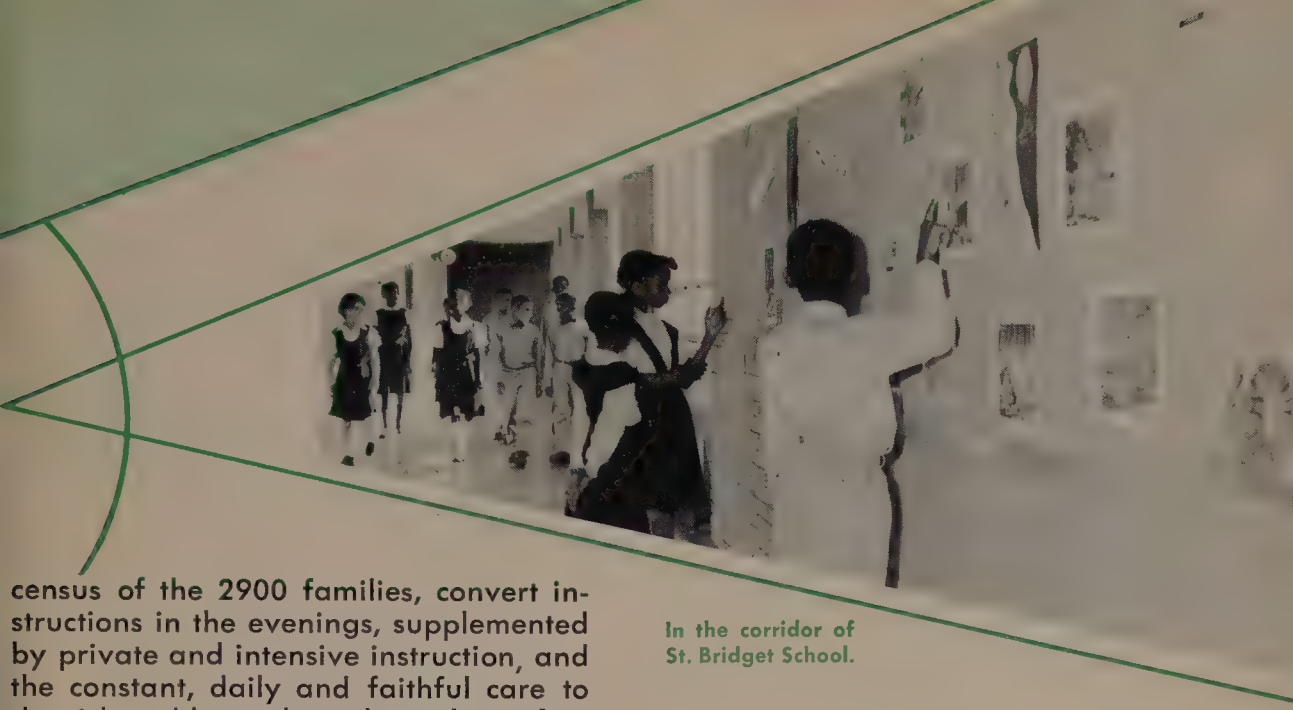
Under the guidance and watchful care of the present archbishop of St. Louis, Most Rev. Joseph E. Ritter, D.D., **the archdiocesan building fund has just completed the new Saint Bridget's school, rectory and convent.** The Church, now a city landmark, is being renovated and by spring the chimes of what are considered the finest bells in St. Louis, will again be heard.

Concentrated in a few city blocks, a few steps from St. Bridget's, two projects, housing 2900 large families, loom high against the sky. This is the compact area which is Rev. Aloysius Marschner's parish. Here the priests and sisters activate their deepest aspiration — May His Kingdom come!

The offering of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in the early morning hours by our devoted priests, the co-offering of the Sisters and the faithful parishioners, and the living of that daily Mass in prayer and work, bring down the blessing of God on this ever-growing parish. The busy days of the Fathers cover a well filled schedule of a door-to-door

Sr. M. Clarice, S.B.S. and Sr. Mary of the Holy Child, S.B.S. with children of St. Bridget against a background of towering project buildings in the parish.

Most Rev. Leo C. Byrne, confirming children of St. Bridget Parish.



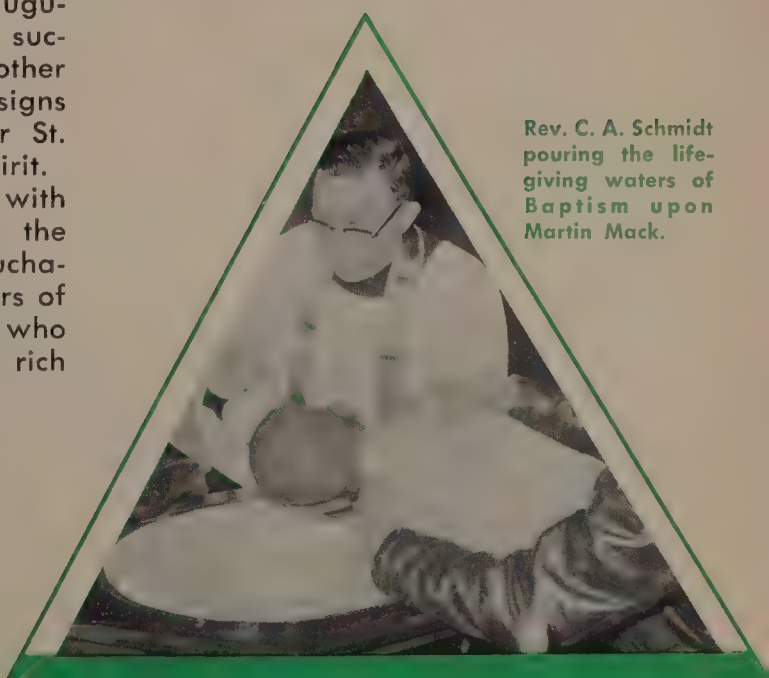
In the corridor of St. Bridget School.

census of the 2900 families, convert instructions in the evenings, supplemented by private and intensive instruction, and the constant, daily and faithful care to the sick and house-bound members of St. Bridget's. Besides these there are the youth post-school activities of Men's Choral Group, the Senior and Junior Legion of Mary and the CYO groups. The work of teaching, training and character formation in St. Bridget's School by the Sisters has its necessary carry-over to the homes, involving direct contact with the parents through visitation or consultation. The happily united work of Priests, Sisters and People is resulting in a new birth of Christ unto a "renewal of the face of the earth" that is Saint Bridget's Parish.

In recent years the number of Baptisms has more than quadrupled. Attendance at Mass and its accompanying reception of the Holy Eucharist, is increasing. "A building rosary," inaugurated by the Fathers, has continued successfully and is about to spread to other apartment buildings. These are signs among the laity of their love for St. Bridget's and the growing parish spirit.

Through the Sisters' daily contact with the children at school and with the adults in the home visitations, the Eucharistic Christ is radiated. To the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, as to all who love St. Bridget's, the time of a rich spiritual harvest is at hand.

We have assisted gratefully at the laying of the Cornerstone of the new plant; we have watched prayerfully the growing, re-strengthening and re-beautifying of the grand old church; we look hopefully out on the field of Souls to whom that Church will be Mother, Security and Hope. **We thank God for those of the past who sowed the seed of Faith, and for those of the present — Priests, Sisters and People — who with devoted, zealous hearts pray and work that Christ may reign once again in loving, faithful souls of the Parish of St. Bridget of Erin in historic St. Louis.**



Rev. C. A. Schmidt pouring the life-giving waters of Baptism upon Martin Mack.

from the BOSTON mission

INT

By
Mother M. Anacletus, S.B.S.
(Newton, Massachusetts)
pictured above with Mrs. Gomes

MRS. GOMES has been a victim of arthritis for about ten years. Anyone who has arthritis knows it does not improve with years. Many attempts to arrest or relieve this condition in Mrs. Gomes' case have been made. She was a patient in one of the largest hospitals in Boston a few years back. At that time her condition was so critical that it was thought she could not get better and was in

danger of death. Knowing of her great desire to be a Catholic, Mr. Gomes called the priest who was chaplain at the hospital and Mrs. Gomes was baptized in the Catholic Faith. Strange to relate, or, we should say, through the Providence of God, she gradually gained back her strength and after some time was discharged from the hospital but still unable to get about without the aid of someone. This, of course, meant that practically all her time was spent in bed since her two boys were very small and her husband worked, which meant that no one could be there to assist her.

It was during this time that Mrs. Gomes sent for the Sisters and expressed her longing desire to make her First Holy Communion. Each week the Sisters visited her and gave her the instructions necessary for the reception of Penance and Holy Communion. But, before many months had passed Mrs. Gomes had to return to the hospital, this time for therapeutic treatment which helped some. After she returned home we resumed our visits and instructions. Arrangements were made with Father and he brought Mrs. Gomes her First Holy Communion the day following the feast of Our Lady's Assumption. To see the happiness which radiated from Mrs. Gomes, her thankfulness to Almighty God for having come to her, sparing her for this longed-for day with the hope of helping others, is recompense enough for the many visits made to her little home in the South End of Boston.

Her desire now is to make others know Him, love Him and serve Him as she sends messages from her bed of pain to those whom she feels sure want to "serve the Lord in gladness" as she tells that her "sufferings are nothing when she thinks of all He suffered for her."

Roxbury, Massachusetts, is the busy mission point from which seven S.B.S. missioners at Blessed Sacrament Social Service Center extend the Christ-message of comfort and love. For over 40 years the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament have served the needy Christ in this Boston area through the many and various spiritual, cultural and educational activities of the Social Service Center, through visitations in nearby projects and in more distant homes, through material aid, advice and help in the solution of problems. Here, indeed, is a mission field at home.

Sr. M. Eugenia, S.B.S. instructs Mr. Gomes.

we

the youngest members
of the S.B.S. family,
say a BIG THANK YOU
to you, our generous friends,
who have already sent a
DONATION for the much
needed St. Michael's Convent
which is being erected at
Torresdale, Pennsylvania for
our aged and infirm Sisters
of the Blessed Sacrament.
Our Sisters need many more
friends like you to help!
WON'T YOU TELL OTHERS
OF THIS NEED?

$100 will help equip clinic

$50 will help equip kitchen

you

Send building donations to:

MISSION FIELDS AT HOME

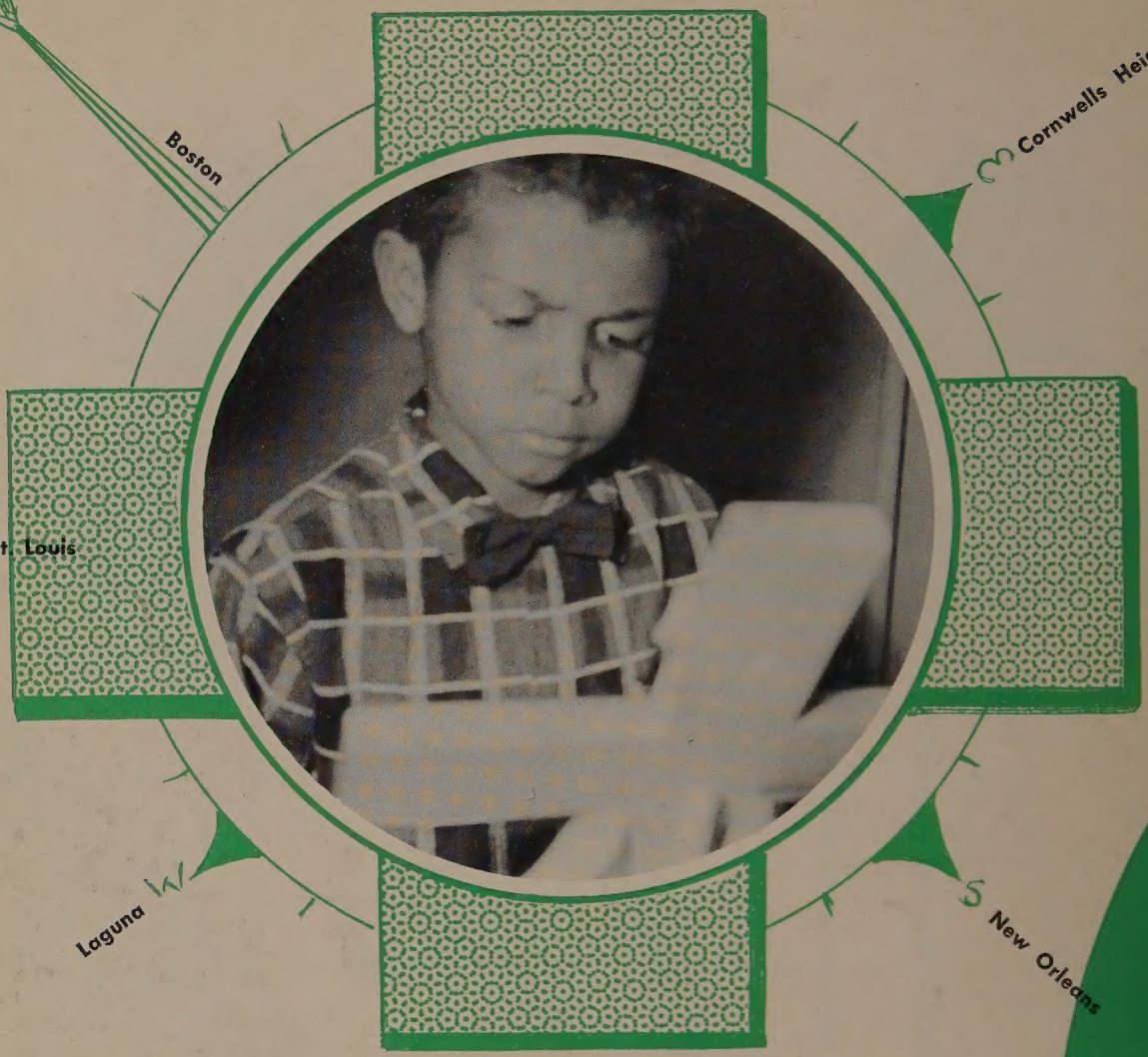
Sisters of the

Blessed Sacrament

Cornwells Heights, Pa.

$25 will help with furnishings

$5 $10 will help too



The SISTERS OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT are home missioners. An American community dedicated to serving Christ in the Indians and Colored People, they were founded in 1891 by Reverend Mother Katharine Drexel of Philadelphia. In twenty-one states from New York to California over 500 S.B.S. missioners carry on an apostolate which includes education, home visitation, catechetical instruction and social service work. It reaches into large cities in the North, South and Mid-West, into rural areas of the deep South and into the Indian reservations of New Mexico, Arizona and South Dakota.

This issue of MISSION FIELDS AT HOME ENCOMPASSES mission activities from the NORTH, SOUTH, EAST AND WEST.

PICTURES:

Above: Mert Tillman to be baptized at Easter with his mother.

Front Cover: Ronda Sue, Ernest Wayne and little Gregory Earl McLenmore with their Mother.